

REMARKS

Claims 2-4, 6, 15-18, 44-47, 49, 51 and 59 are presently pending in this application. Claims 19-23, 25-30, 32, 57 and 58 have been cancelled in this paper, and claim 59 has been rewritten in independent form.

In the Office Action dated 3 May 2005, claims 19-23, 25-30, 32, 57 and 58 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,234,080B1 issued to Tani. The applicants do not concede to the merits of this rejection, but these claims have been cancelled without prejudice to pursuing these claims in a continuation application. Therefore, this rejection is now moot.

Claims 2-4, 6, 15-18, 44-47, 49 and 51 were allowed in the present Office Action, and claim 59 was indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claim 59 has been rewritten as suggested by the Examiner and is now in condition for allowance. Based on the allowance of claim 47, the applicants understand that this claim has been reinstated in the application. Therefore, claims 2-4, 6, 15-18, 44-47, 49, 51 and 59 are in condition for allowance.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, the pending claims comply with 35 U.S.C. § 112 and are patentable over the applied art. The applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application and a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner has any questions or believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is encouraged to call the undersigned at (206) 359-3258.

RESPONSE UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.116

EXPEDITED PROCEDURE – Art Unit 1746

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Respectfully submitted,

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